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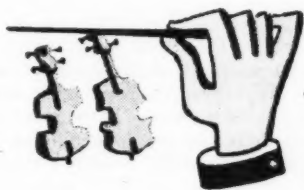
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Editorial Notes

Mr. Petrillo's threat to stop all recording with the entrance of the New Year is disturbing news. We suspect what galvanized Mr. Petrillo to threaten suspension of recording can be attributed to the many abuses that all branches of the industry have demonstrated—especially the preponderance of recorded music over live music on radio networks. Perhaps the record companies will have something official to say on the threatened ban at a later date. It would hardly be assumed that they will accept this without strong protest substantially fortified by the public.

If another recording ban were imposed on the companies, it would hardly prove as crippling as the last. Indubitably the record companies have a reserve of fine recordings which would carry them for a considerable length of time. A ban might also actuate the repressing of desirable records, long deleted from the catalogues and result in an influx of worthwhile European records.

* * *

Our article on Magnetic Tape in the September issue has provoked inquiries. The question most asked is whether tape is superior to wire recording. The relative advantages of tape over wire are so great, in the opinion of Mr. A. C. Shaney and several other technicians of our acquaintance that "it is only a matter time before wire recording will become obsolete". The fundamental reasons for this preeminence, according to Mr. Shaney, are as follows:

1. There are no tangles in tape. When wire breaks under high speed operation, it usually snaps into a snarl or "bird's nest". This unpleasant tangle requires a considerable amount of skill and patience to undo.

2. Tape has unlimited editing facilities. It is almost impossible to edit wire recording

because of the problems in knotting the wire, and then preventing future breaks at the sharp bends of the knot.

3. There is a lowered Cross Talk in tape recording. An uninsulated layer magnetized wire is wound in direct contact with an adjacent layer of magnetized wire. As a result, magnetic interaction takes place and a cross transfer of signals is common. Cross-magnetization is virtually eliminated in magnetic tape recording because a distinct insulated layer of specially treated paper tape lies between each thin magnetic layer.

4. The slower speed of tape makes for less noise. In order to attain anywhere near an acceptable response characteristic, it is necessary to run wire at a comparatively high speed. At least 24 feet per second or higher is characteristic of present-day practice. Equivalent performance on some of the newest tape recorders may be obtained with magnetic tape running at less than four feet per second. The high wire speed produces more noise, increased wire flutter, and is characterized by greater signal fluctuation. The greater compliance of paper tape makes it a relatively simple matter to keep the tape in constant contact with the playback head without excessive wear of any of the component parts involved in recording or reproduction.

5. There are reduced mechanical problems to tape. Any layman can recognize the mechanical problems involved in feeding a thin wire (approximately .004 inches in diameter, like a human hair) through a machine. It is virtually impossible consistently to grip and feed the wire at a fixed rate of speed. A half-hour wire program may vary as much as five minutes in playback (a difference of 16 per cent in pitch). The magnetic tape will vary less than a few seconds (approximately 0.2 per cent), and this variation is undetectable by the human ear.

6. The average wire recorder requires approximately six minutes to rewind a half-hour program, while 30 seconds is all that is required for an hour's program on the magnetic tape recorder.

7. At the present time, magnetic tape is appreciably lower in price than an equivalent playing time of wire medium.

8. There are better Response Characteristics in tape.

9. Finally, there is the matter of reduced Volume Fluctuation in tape. A typical home recorder, utilizing wire, for example, produced a marked decrease in level. A 5,000 cycle tone dropped in level approximately 9 db, or twelve and a half per cent below its original volume, when the wire was rotated at 180 degrees. This phenomenon can never take place on tape recorders because it is impossible for the tape to rotate on its major axis.

* * *

The article, *Discovering Bach*, which we published last month resulted in many friendly letters. We are greatly interested in stories of music behind the scenes in the home, and we hope to have others of equal interest. We have known about Mr. Ridgely's Bachian education for a long time, but it was only recently that we pinned him down to all the facts. We suggested at the time of writing that his wife be permitted to enter the picture, but he professed a desire to surprise her with the printed tale. There would seem to be no question of a doubt that Mrs. Ridgely was surprised, but the element of surprise was neatly tossed back into Mr. Ridgely's and your editor's laps by his wife in a letter which deserves publication. It reads:

"Dear Mr. Reed:— It was a pleasant surprise to read the story of my husband's 'discovery of Bach' in your October issue, and I am highly flattered at the part he believes I played in his 'discovery'. I regret that you two men did not let me have a finger in the pie, for there is more to the tale of Bach and the Ridgelys, and I think I might have helped compose a better opening paragraph. Yes, my husband told me that one 'had' was omitted from the second sentence by the printer, but I still find the balance of that sentence a bit involved. Most of the facts are exactly as told, but there is the little matter of not infrequent disharmony created unwittingly by the most harmonious of composers.

"Oh yes, I play some of the *Preludes* from the *Well-Tempered Clavichord* in the morning, but never the *Fugues*. However, there are some fugal dissensions regarding the *Preludes*, and these are very much two-voiced ones. Being a self-styled amateur pianist—I play for the love of it—I naturally

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FUGITIVE THOUGHTS OF AN OLD MENDELSSOHNIAN

By W. R. Anderson

In the title I unashamedly avow myself. I was brought up on the choral classics, in a part of England devoted to them—Lancashire. Fresh from listening to a new English recording of *Elijah*, I feel an access of pleasure in my old friend Mendelssohn: not, I think, entirely due to nostalgia; but it does contain an element of sentiment, as one's musical feeling is bound to do when life is drawing on, and one contemplates "the good old days". It was not at all a bad education, even if we got too much Handel and not enough Bach, a repletion of Mendelssohn and a scant bit of Wagner.

In the centenary year of Mendelssohn's death his best art should be re-savored and praised: the drama of the oratorios, the landscape-painting of the *Hebrides* and the Scotch Symphony, the delicious theatricalism of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* fairies, and the Court pomp: the tip-top craftsmanship of the scherzos, the copper-bottomed, A No. 1 fugues. This last point is worth noting. Mendelssohn did a grand job of work in reviving Bach's work, when that was badly needed. His devotees in both

England and U.S.A. took up the torch: but I wish they had concentrated more on the older composer. Lahee tells us that Mendelssohn's two most famous oratorios were heard, *St. Paul* in New York in 1838, and *Elijah* in Boston in 1840; but only part of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* has been heard (Boston) by 1874. Still, those early American oratorio societies did sterling work, and we honor them.

There never was a more wholesome influence than Bach's, on Mendelssohn: it shows in the sense of drama (more natural, in some ways, to the latter than the former); and of course in the fugues: in which connection we do well not to overlook the organ works, called "sonatas", but often in strikingly fresh shapings of that old scheme. There are a few excellent piano fugues, too, and a fine rivet-tautener in the *A major Quintet* (in a scherzo, by the way, a form wherein Mendelssohn always excelled: no one to beat him, there). He probably learned from Haydn the value of a fugue in a sonata movement; and perhaps his bright humor also stems from that gay-hearted classic; I

think, too, something of his clarity in instrumentation.

Mendelssohn's chamber music has some first-rate movements. I think of any of the scherzos; of the opening of the octet; the slow movement of the second quintet; the canzonetta of the *Quartet in E flat, Op. 12*; the finale of the *Quartet in A minor, Op. 13*—anyone would surely be mournfully blasé who would not enjoy these.

I wish Mendelssohn had pursued that leit-motiv in *Elijah*. He might have made a grand thing of it, long before Wagner. But here, maybe, enters what Marion M. Scott has so well defined as the root Mendelssohnian weakness, his "lack of force to transcend convention and to push forward". Ideas overflowed, but he did not always make the best of them; there was ample nervous energy, but it was dissipated in too many ways. He was too clever—at athletics, at painting, at sketching, in social life. He took to work he should have shunned, and exhausted his nerve-force early. He was over-cultured, over-bred, over-sensitive, and, for the musician, too sentimental. His sentiment was, in part, genuine, and in part, an aspect of the pose of his age. But no composer ever had neater ideas, and few had his rapier-technique, to which the word "inspirational" might almost be applied. To read a chamber or orchestral score of his, and then one of Schumann's, is to turn, technically, from free life to a jail.

A Brilliant Stroke

To start *Elijah* with the prophetic voice was a brilliant stroke. All his life he was making such deft, athletic strokes—and not pursuing them far enough. With Bach as his ideal, he yet had a soft core. He wanted, for one thing, to sing like an Italian; and he made of religious music the thing that the English loved, not the paradise of either Palestrina or the Calvinist. No wonder he was Queen Victoria's favorite; no wonder Prince Albert copied his style, as did a host of Englishmen—without his happy thoughts or his supreme clarity in orchestration.

Even the *Songs without Words* have their ups, as well as their downs. They are never as subtle, in piano technique or adventurous in harmony, as Schumann can be, but they have their stylish moments. The dovetailing is always happy, and any *agitato* is likely to be rewarding: e.g., in *Nos. 5, 10, 17, 46*,

and so forth. He can put on wings, human or ghostly. The angelic ones, we think, too often let him down. At his best the invention is as good as Chopin's average; a pity he had not a touch of Brahms's wrestling spirit; he lacked toughness, and those heavenly arpeggios would come flopping in, coaxing out the sentimental flat sixths and droopy thirteenthths, and the chromatic descents which were, for Mendelssohn, really mild Avernus-descents. That trick of flopping after starting a good theme is symptomatic.

Strings that Charm

The string ideas, admittedly, tend too much towards grace, fluent charm; yet when he adds a tinge of fervor, as in the *String Quartet in E flat, Op. 44, No. 3* how well it suits his nature! In using the orchestra he was ever happy. He can be as luminous as Schubert, and is more consistently glowing, in that respect. One can revel in the pellucid fitness of instruments to ideas, in the *Italian* symphony. Felicities abound: the fugato in the first movement, placed just where it tells best—and on a new, theme, too. The first theme, in the wind, is combined with it, and creeps prettily back later, when in the recapitulation the fugato is taken in as a full member of the second-subject group. This is dandy. There is something about Mendelssohn's clean craftsmanship that makes us, on an optimistic day, think that we, too, could have done that—if, in the words of the old tag (to be taken literally), we "had had a mind to it". Mendelssohn at his best is a mind-and-spirit bracer.

His third movement waltz, in the *Italian* Symphony, is eminent in grace, and free from the weakness of, for example, Tchaikovsky's similarly placed essays. And nobody could keep a dance-finale whirling with a better balance of variety and unity. The Pilgrims in the second movement are a notion, certainly, but they droop into the *religioso*, and we console ourselves with the chamber scoring.

That pictorial imagination of his was apt to get the better of his constructive interests. He was always swiftly taken with pictures—of Rome, of the Hebridean islands. He was the supreme souvenir-collector of his age. In Scotland something in his heart seemed to reach out to the Scot's wildness—a quality

for which the northerner, perhaps too highly praised on other grounds (I speak as a duly modest Scot), rarely gets full credit. It was, for example, at the heart of Burns, that combination of wildness and tenderness.

Mendelssohn's imagination was vivid, if narrow. Strange that, though so sentimental, he was rooted in classicism. There lies a weakness that perhaps shows most in the chamber music, and least in the symphonies and the superb violin concerto: for, given its natural limitations of feeling and intent, superb it is. He had the wings of a dove: did they sometimes melt, like Icarus's, in the ardor of temperament that lacked depth? He was wrapped around in personal affection and public adulation, and pulled in too many ways by his astonishing versatility. Yet he was a keen self-critic, according to his own standards; and there was nobody to enforce any others on him—only the ideal in his heart of his beloved Bach. Perhaps he was too conscientious to live. Too impetuous in one way, he was in another too little adventurous. Again Marion Scott: "His vitality was drained, not by his vices, but by his virtues."

These are fugitive thoughts, for we cannot now hold steadily the image or the ideal of Mendelssohn and his world. That Admirable Crichton, jack of so many trades and master of too many, seems unreal, in this our world, that he could never have endured for even half of his thirty-eight years. One takes up the best of his work always with zest: but how often with longing? Does a person suffer from the lack of Mendelssohn, as he might faint for the fellowship of Bach or Brahms? Mendelssohn fills no persistent need, no final demand of the spirit. At his finest, he is much more than the sweet singer of an idle hour: but too often that is his chief virtue and validity. We may sometimes be annoyed, though, that he should by the thoughtless be both blamed and praised for the wrong qualities. Those who crave his sweetness won't hear a word against him; that, for them, is all. It is understandable: this is a harsh world, today, and one doesn't want to hurt the old-timers. Those who casually under-estimate the composer are more tiresome: they hear the weaknesses, but not the beauties (I think back, after my session with *Elijah*, to that Handelian skill in using the voice: he, too,

loved it). We can all go back to the chamber music, the virility of the organ works, the delicious orchestration, clear as sun on new snow. Let us enjoy the best of him, basking in the brilliance and by-passing the banality. Taken in that spirit, when we are in the mood, Mendelssohn remains, after his first century, a right Good Companion.

Editorial Notes

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resent my husband telling me how much better Edwin Fischer or Rosalind Tureck plays a line. If my work as a housewife and a mother permitted me to practice long hours I might be more proficient.

"Our mutual love of Bach's music has indeed brought us both great pleasure and an enviable mutual interest, but it has also promoted some healthy arguments on the relative merits of various Bachian recordings and Bachian interpretations. My husband's fondness for Bach's music has developed to such a point that he persists in playing every new Bach recording to any and all of his friends. I have often admonished him, knowing that certain people did not wish to hear the music. Men inevitably ride their hobbies harder than women. In closing I would like to point out that Debussy has never become a favorite with my husband, and I have long since given up trying to get him to like the composer's music, just as I have long since given up trying to play Debussy's piano compositions."

* * *

Keynote Records has a new and very active president in John Hammond, who is well known in the record industry for his up-and-coming progressive ideas. The new classical label, instituted by Mr. Hammond, is known as its "Manuscript Series", and the first two recordings are well worth hearing. They are performances of Stravinsky's *Dumbarton Oaks Concerto*, conducted by the composer, and of the Vivaldi *Concerto Grosso in D minor, Op. 3, No. 11*. Owing to the large advance orders, Keynote has had to delay its review copies of these works.

"In the near future," Mr. Hammond states, "we expect to start distribution of

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ON SERVICING YOUR RADIO AND PHONOGRAPH

Since relatively few musical listeners know anything about the insides of their radios and phonographs when something goes wrong they have to seek out the serviceman. A great many people feel that this business of servicing radios and phonographs is a racket, and certainly from stories which have reached the editorial room of this periodical such a point of view would not be without its justification.

How can one judge the merits of radio servicemen and distinguish between the ones who are honest and the ones who are not? It is extremely difficult for the layman to differentiate between the conscientious radio serviceman, who knows his business and who strives to do an honest job at a fair price, and one who takes advantage of the unsuspecting customer. Fortunately, the latter type of repairman is in the minority and, as in the case of any profession, his shortcomings and unethical practices will sooner or later prove his undoing.

There are many tricks resorted to by the unethical serviceman. For example, charging for replacements of parts which they do not replace, charging for labor which they do not perform, etc. There have been many cases where radio receivers have been sabotaged by unethical radio repairmen because the owner, thinking an estimate too high, re-

fused to authorize the repair of the receiver. There have been many so-called servicemen who have either been inadequately trained or have failed to keep abreast of the rapid developments in the radio and phonograph industry during the past few years. Men of this calibre are not to be trusted with the repair and maintenance of the more complicated, new, radio and phonograph equipment on the market today. Unfortunately, these incompetents and "gyp artists" have, by their actions, caused far too many radio set owners to brand as scoundrels or worse, the repair fraternity as a whole from coast to coast. An effort to eliminate such men has been started across country by manufacturers of machine and of machine parts. Already a bill has been put up in New York to license repairmen, and it is hoped that it will be passed, and also that similar bills be put through elsewhere—indeed, throughout the entire nation. But more on this later.

The competent and well-trained radio serviceman is a very highly skilled technician, who is often underpaid for his services. Like the doctor or the lawyer, he must continue to study throughout his professional career if he is to keep abreast with the latest developments and techniques in a rapidly advancing industry. He is entitled to, and should obtain, a fair price for his services.

Many people fail to understand why they should be required to pay a service-call charge or a labor charge for an estimate. They evidently feel that the radioman should be glad to get business and should, therefore, make the service call or give the estimate gratis. Yet these same people do not expect a doctor to call professionally on them without paying for his services and his time, nor would they expect to obtain the advice of a lawyer free of charge.

Rising Costs

That the price of labor has gone up few people remember when they call in the radio repairman. The time element in his work is not taken into consideration by most. If the serviceman spends an hour or more on a set endeavoring to locate the trouble and it turns out that it is only the replacement of a small item—like a filter or a resistor—which costs less than a dollar, his time has to be considered and paid for as well as the defective part. If the serviceman could walk in and place his finger instantly on the trouble all would be well, but this is not always possible. The radio and the phonograph are somewhat complicated mechanisms and often require careful and thorough examination. If the trouble is a burnt-out tube or a weak one, there is still some time element involved in the serviceman's examination of tubes, for he should examine all tubes when he finds one or more bad. Perhaps to be on the safe side, if one's machine develops trouble, one might first of all—before calling in a repairman—take the tubes from one's set down to the store for examination. Since the tube testing machine clearly reveals the condition of the tube (bad, weak, good), one might watch the reading and ascertain for oneself if the serviceman is being honest with one. If the man tells you that a tube is too close to the weak point for its good, accept his advice and purchase a new one. It has been our experience that few men in radio repair shops are dishonest about tube readings. If, upon returning home, one finds one's set is still not functioning as it should after the replacement of tubes—provided, of course, replacement has been made—then one has to call in the repairman.

One of the serviceman's greatest headaches is the small radio or midget set. These units

are usually harder to work on than the console type, yet they develop the same troubles, and replacement components cost the same amount, and the serviceman should be entitled to the same labor charges for repairing them. Frequently the time element spent in taking the midget set apart and putting it back together is longer than the work of a similar nature on a large unit. The owners of midget sets cannot seem to be made to understand that the cost of replacing a set that originally cost \$12 or \$15 could conceivably equal or exceed the original cost of the unit. However, the serviceman giving such a high estimate on a low-priced set of this type would probably be branded as a gyp or a racketeer.

The conscientious serviceman, receiving a set for repairs which is three or more years old, will usually try to advise the customer to have the unit completely overhauled; figuring to replace all tubes and other component parts which have gone bad or which, from his experience, he knows may sooner or later go bad. He will usually explain that he can restore the set to good operating condition by replacing only the defective parts; but there is a good chance that the other parts, due to their weakened condition, may sooner or later go bad and that the owner may have another repair job on his hands. Many owners, upon receiving such information, have been known to accuse the serviceman of "padding" his estimate or otherwise attempting to build up his profit on the job. Many times the customer may elect to have only the work performed which is absolutely necessary to restore his set to operating condition. Should the set later fail, however, many owners seemingly are forgetful of the warning which the serviceman has given them and immediately berate him for incompetence, etc.

A Regular Service

It would be wise if all people had their radio and phonographs serviced regularly—every six months. The dentist advocates this course with one's teeth and many people follow the dentist's advice and save themselves endless troubles later. The radio and phonograph are quite as "fragile" in their way as one's teeth, and that semi-annual examination may save a lot of serious and very expensive trouble later on. The wise

car driver has his automobile serviced regularly—then why not the radio and phonograph? They too are mechanical contrivances that wear out with constant usage.

"Several years ago when I was actively engaged in the radio service business," writes an Indiana service engineer with a large manufacturing company, "I conceived the idea of placing all the defective components which I received from a receiver in a small bag and attaching the bag to the set in order that I could return these to the customer at the time the set was repaired. Every item was listed separately on the itemized repair bill, and these parts were identified for the customer upon presentation of the bill. There was a certain psychological effect in this procedure, in that, the customer was made fully to realize just what had been replaced. It also helped, in cases where the receiver went bad again shortly after repair, to show to the customer's satisfaction whether or not the defective part, causing the new failure, was one of those which had been replaced at the time of original repair."

"Personally, I have long advocated the radio servicing business should somehow be government controlled," continues the same executive. "As I see it, the radio serviceman should be required to pass a technical examination which is designed to determine his capabilities and understanding. Upon passing such an examination, he would be awarded an examination which would entitle him to practice. This, to my way of thinking, would serve a twofold purpose—first of all, the incompetent serviceman would not be able to obtain such a license until he had undergone proper training. Secondly, I believe, it would place the radio servicing profession on a much higher plane. Radio set owners could feel fairly certain that the radio repairman with whom they entrusted their ailing receivers had sufficient knowledge and skill properly to repair it. This might sound somewhat drastic, but I believe it is the only sure cure for all the evils that do exist in the profession; and I am fairly certain that practically all honest, competent, well-trained servicemen would be more than willing to undergo such an examination. They would readily realize the advantage which this program would offer to their chosen profession."

The presentation of the facts in this article have been based on actual experiences, and information given to us by various technical men. If this article does not prove helpful in pointing out just how the public in general can distinguish between the conscientious radio serviceman and the reacketeer, it cannot be helped. As the same executive quoted above says: "Unfortunately, this cannot be determined until after the damage is done." However, it is our contention—based on experience—that a firstclass radio and record shop usually employs the services of a good repairman. They could not in this day and age afford to be guilty of employing a poor serviceman, since their business would be bound to suffer in a very short time. Hence our advice to the reader is to go to a reputable shop, unless you know of some man who is a recognized specialist in the field. Since the war, we have been informed, there have been a great many men who had some experience with short-wave equipment in the services, and some of these men have undertaken to do repair work for which they were not properly trained. Perhaps it might be well to pass up such men in favor of the professional who has made radio and phonograph repair work his business for long years, it might in the long run save extra cost and extra headaches.

Editorial Notes

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several more releases in the Keynote Manuscript Series. These will include the Shostakovich *Quartet No. 3*, the Mozart *Divertimento in D major*, de Falla's *Concerto for Harpsichord*, Cimarosa's *Concerto for Oboe and strings*, and the Vaughn Williams *Concerto for Oboe and Strings*." The new Keynote releases are pressed on plastic and priced at \$1.50 per record.

RCA Victor recently announced a reduction in price of its Heritage Series recordings from \$3.50 to \$2.50. The company also recently announced an increase in the price of its albums. Both 10-inch and 12-inch albums, formerly priced at 75c and 85c respectively, are now \$1.00. The Recordrama albums, and others with bound-in pages, have been raised from \$1.00 to \$1.25.



RECORD NOTES AND REVIEWS

Orchestra

BERLIOZ: *Romeo and Juliet (Dramatic Symphony)*—Excerpts; The NBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Arturo Toscanini. Victor set V or DV, three plastic discs, price \$6.85, and M or DM-1160, three regular discs, price \$3.85.

▲In the July 1946 issue, in an article on *Romeo and Juliet* in music, I expressed the wish that someday Toscanini would record the orchestral sections of Berlioz's dramatic symphony. It was in the following February that the entire work was given in two broadcasts by NBC with Toscanini directing. The radio performance substantiated my belief that the orchestral sections of this often strangely incoherent and unwieldy score are the only worthy pages, and further that they rank among the composer's finest work. It is interesting and not illogical that Berlioz, a French romantic, should come so close to Shakespeare in the *Love Scene* of this work.

This music reveals itself as a truly inspired counterpart of the play. Even the sagacious Tovey links much of this music to the actual poetry of the scene—and not inadvisedly as the discerning listener can discover for himself.

There are three imposing sections to the massive score of Berlioz's *Romeo*—*Romeo's Reverie and the Fête at the Capulets*, the *Love Scene*, and the more familiar *Queen Mab Scherzo*. The first two are included in this set; the *Scherzo* has been excluded because of technical problems at the time of recording and will be issued later. The ardent *Romeo* is well depicted in the opening part of the first orchestral section, for Berlioz's chromatic harmonies supply the needed sentiment. The construction of this movement is indicative of the composer's striking imagination and ingenuity; its changing moods—from the rhapsodic to the festive—are logically handled. One should read Tovey on the *Love Scene*. It is subtly poetic music, made eloquent by Berlioz's gift for beautiful orchestration and brought to life in this recording by the sheer magic of Toscanini's interpre-

tative genius. I do not believe anyone could have endowed this scene with more expressive feeling and intensity of spirit. The noted conductor has never been more emotionally persuasive than in this well balanced and warm-toned recording. This is easily the "highlight" of the month —P.H.R.

BERNSTEIN: *Facsimile—A Choreographic Essay*; RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Victor set M or DM-1142, two discs, price \$2.85.

▲Bernstein wrote his *Facsimile* for the Ballet Theater in 1946. The scenario is by Jerome Robbins, who was also responsible for the choreography of *Fancy Free*. As a ballet *Facsimile* was pretentious with suggestions of Fraudian characterizations. Mr. Bernstein tells us that "The inspiration of Jerome Robbin's scenario, with its profoundly moving psychological implications, entered into the picture to a degree which, I believe, produced what one might almost call 'neurotic music', mirroring the psychological tensions of the characters involved". In the theater, the music best serves its purpose; apart from the stage picture the neuroticism of much of the score tends to create a diffuseness of purpose in the mind of the listener. Even with a knowledge of the scenario one is constantly endeavoring to fit the action of the ballet into the extreme intensity of the music.

The performance is an excellent one, far better than the one that the composer made of his *Fancy Free* for Decca—in which there was more than ample evidence that Bernstein was given insufficient rehearsals and working with an inferior ensemble. But the RCA Victor Orchestra (assembled from the best orchestral men available in New York) is unquestionably a superior organization. The recording is realistic and suggestive of some extension in range. —P.H.R.

HAYDN: *Symphony No. 94 in G major (Surprise)*; The Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Serge Koussevitzky. Victor set M or DM-1155, three discs, price \$3.85.

▲Koussevitzky's older recording of this symphony, made in 1929, has always been the preferred one. The 1939 set, by Barlow and the Columbia Broadcasting Symphony, was in comparison a disappointment due to

an inferior orchestra and a coarser quality of reproduction. Although not suggestive of the extended range found in other recent issues of Victor, the reproduction in this set is completely satisfying. One immediately notes this with the playing of the short introduction to the first movement, where the conductor's finely molded *crescendo* is captured and projected from the record for the first time. The expressive qualities of the recording from the whisper of a *pianissimo* to the fullness of a *forti* are realistic. Much of the refinement of Koussevitzky's reading was lost in the older version. Here it is splendidly substantiated.

The nickname "Surprise" given to this symphony, because of the drum-strokes in the slow movement, hardly registers any emotion akin to astonishment in these days: the modern orchestra handles this sort of thing in a less pronounced manner than the orchestra of Haydn's day. The old story that Haydn employed these drum-strokes to arouse the ladies of the audience from sleep was contradicted by him. However, one London critic of the time likened the effect of the drum-strokes "to a shepherdess, lulled by the sound of a distant waterfall, awakened suddenly from sleep and frightened by the unexpected discharge of a musket." It is an amusing example of the fertility of mind of the 18th-century writers. Most of us have grown too familiar with the charming *Andante*, which is included in simplified form in most student pianist's repertoire. Too, the "surprise" element has been ridiculed to the detriment of true enjoyment of the movement, which is a great pity. Listening to Koussevitzky's polished and carefully calculated unfoldment of this movement one realizes its worth anew.

Haydn aimed for big effects and strength of purpose in this symphony, which did not preclude rhythmic grace in his melodies. Koussevitzky's performance is a consistent pleasure throughout and one welcomes its re-recording under more favorable circumstances. —P.H.R.

SCHUBERT: *Symphony in B minor (Unfinished)*; The Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Walter. Columbia set MM-699, three discs, price \$4.60.

▲In the annals of the symphony there is no work quite like this one. One can only be

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thankful that it was never completed, for what exists of the scherzo suggests that the work would have lost a great deal of its magic had this movement and a similarly uninspired finale been added. The symphony seems to have sprung from the composer's song inspiration, and one agrees with the late Philip Hale that in the moments of grandeur in the first movement, "we recognize the Schubert that conceived the *Doppelgaenger*, the *Gruppe aus dem Tartarus*, and a few other songs in which dramatic force comes before charming lyricism". Hale's analysis of the second movement deserves repeating. He finds it has "the serenity—that is, Schubert's romantic serenity, which is another thing than the classic serenity of Mozart". Serenity is, of course, one of the great qualities of any art, lost unfortunately to many modern composers.

Walter's earlier recording of this work, made with the Vienna Philharmonic Symphony in 1939, was greatly admired by most critics. Had Victor elected it to the honors of red seal discs and a better album, it would have stood the test of time and the interests of record buyers. Being pressed on the less attractive black labels and housed in a flimsy album, it was not treated with due respect by the record buying public. It is gratifying to have Walter's reading of this work in a new and finer recording—one in which the dynamic gradations and the balance and beauty of tone are better produced. The conductor gives a more appreciable performance than he did eight years ago. It is one in which the playing is rhythmically more stringent, with the result that the poetic eloquence is strengthened. Thus the set is no mere duplication but a discerning reconsideration of an old and familiar work by a conductor who has always been persuasive in his unfoldment of Schubert's music.

—P.H.R.

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Symphony No. 1 in G minor, Op. 13 (Winter Daydreams)*: The Santa Monica Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Jacques Rachmilovich. DISC set 801 (automatic only), four discs, price \$6.15 (with tax).

▲Tchaikovsky's *First Symphony* was written in his twentieth year after emerging from his student's course at St. Petersburg,

and revised eight years later. It gave the composer much concern undoubtedly since he was endeavoring to work in academic forms for which he had no real sympathy. Later, he was to exert his individuality and skill and pursue a different course. Curiously, there is a Mendelssohnian character to this work, a melodic sweetness and volubility, but unlike Mendelssohn who realized the need of contrasting key-signatures Tchaikovsky adheres to his chosen key of *G minor*. The first movement has been called the most satisfactory—yet it threatens with its melancholic characteristics to become mere sentimentality, and is only saved—as Edwin Evans has contended—"by an underlying youthful ardor". The last movement is unquestionably the most individual, for here the boisterousness and exuberance are borne of a truly unbuttoned "youthful ardor". The song-like second movement, entitled "Desolate and misty country", is hardly comparable to the *Andante cantabile* of the *Fifth Symphony*; it suffers from a lack of contrast. Of the scherzo, Evans says: "It is an attractive and pleasing movement, full of musicianly qualities, but it is not Tchaikovsky." The composer did much better later with his waltz tunes.

Mr. Racmilovich gives an earnest and expressive account of the score, but the recording lacks enlivening resonance and that essential tonal fullness which gives so much pleasure to most modern symphonic reproductions. It is a curious and lamentable fact that far too many first performances on records these days are recorded in a like manner, thus giving them the characteristics of sets long discarded by the big companies.

—P.H.R.

Concerto

TCHAIKOVSKY: *Piano Concerto No. 1 in F flat major (Op. 23)*. Artur Schnabel (piano) and the Minneapolis Orchestra, conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos. Victor set M or DM-1159, four discs, price \$5.00.

▲Only two previous versions have to be taken into account—the Rubinstein-Barbirolli and the Horowitz-Toscanini. Egon

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Petri once made a version of this popular concerto, but it was sadly lacking in the essential Slavic quality. The music, of course, is too well known to warrant much comment; it is surprising that the last recording, that of Horowitz, dates back to November, 1941. (The Rubinstein was released here in 1933, after a prosperous currency in England.)

According to all reports, the original Rubinstein set was one of the most successful recordings, financially, ever released, and it is not surprising that the pianist should wish to re-record it. Now he has the benefit of modern technique, and is heard to better advantage, though one can hardly say that it is a particularly well-balanced version. Rubinstein comes through magnificently; so magnificently that the orchestra is dwarfed. Brilliance there is in plenty; but is this concert hall realism? Compare the beginning of side 8 in all three versions (the breaks are identical throughout). Only a very sharp pair of ears can detect the important figure of the flutes and clarinets in the new album; it is more discernible in the Horowitz-Toscanini; but only in the Rubinstein-Barbirolli does it really come through.

Despite the age of the latter, and the lower level at which it is recorded, I find it to be the best balanced and still remarkably vital in sound. It is the warmest of the interpretations, also. In this new set, Rubinstein is flashier, more assured, very much the virtuoso—and less sensitive. He plays quite well, and in itself the set is good; but on a comparative basis it suffers.

Some curious things happen in the slow movement. Mitropoulos' pacing is very slow, and Rubinstein makes no effort to hustle him along. The result is a stretched-out statement of a good lyric theme. At the beginning of the prestissimo section of this movement (beginning of side 6) Rubinstein, like Horowitz, goes into a frantic burst of virtuosity; he too wants to show that he can play fast. In the old set the tempo was saner. Tchaikovsky, after all, was writing music, not *études transcendantes*. Mitropoulos seems to have somewhat the same feeling for the music that Toscanini had—a rather aloof kinship of the I-don't-especially-admire-you-but-let's-do-the-best-we-can type. Rubinstein, though, identifies himself more with the music than did Horowitz, and thus

the new set is preferable. Rubinstein probably hasn't said the last word on the subject, however.
—H.C.S.

Chamber Music

DEBUSSY: *Sonata for Violincello and Piano* (1915); Raya Garbousova and Artur Balsam. Concert Hall Society set 10. Limited Edition.

▲Of the three sonatas which Debussy wrote in the last years of his life, this is the least inspired and satisfactory, although the workmanship is meticulous. The thematic material is fragmentary, or rather the composer's handling of it gives this impression, for the three movements—Prologue, Serenade, Finale (each taking a single record face—are too brief for true sonata treatment. The work has more of the characteristics of a fantasy, and we are told that Debussy thought of calling it "Pierrot mad with the moon" which at least gives us a keynote to the thought—if not program—behind its inspiration. Mme. Garbousova invests her part of the performance with beauty of tone and technical resourcefulness and Mr. Balsam gives her admirable support. The recording is excellently contrived. On the fourth side, the two artists play an arrangement of the Minuet from Debussy's popular *Petite Suite*.
—P.H.R.

MOZART: *Quintet in D major, K. 593*; The Budapest String Quartet with Milton Katims (viola). Columbia set MM-708, three discs, price \$4.60.

▲The present ensemble plays with technical proficiency and an appreciable comprehension of Mozart's emotional and dramatic qualities. However, listening to this performance I find it does not satisfy me like the decade-old one made by the Pro Arte Quartet with Alfred Hobday (Victor set 350). Of the three quintets, which this latter ensemble performed on records, the *D major* was its most searching unfoldment. A decade is a long time to live with one performance, and it apt to leave the listener, long wooed and won by it, somewhat bigoted toward a new one. Perhaps the reproduction of this set, which is very alive and richly resonant,

changes too much for me the aural prospectus. There is not the same intimacy of mood nor a comparable blend of ensemble in this set as is found in the older one. Here, the first violinist's tone is often sharp and thin, and frequently his instrument does not blend as it should with the others, a condition which does not prevail in the Pro Arte-Hobday album. One of the merits of this set, however, is its quieter surfaces (so desirable in music of Mozart). The lower level of the older recording makes surface noise unavoidable, particularly when the musical sound is turned to a realistic quality. Since the Pro Arte-Hobday performance is no longer available, this one becomes the more desirable. I am sure had I not possessed the older version I would have been less critical of this one.

Einstein tells us that this quintet and the later *E flat* one (K. 614) "bear all the earmarks intended for a connoisseur". All four movements reveal Mozart's genius at its height. The opening movement, after an elegaic introduction, seems to laugh at passion with its violent, broken rhythms. The *Adagio* returns us to the mood of the introduction; Einstein relates this movement to the *Jupiter Symphony*. Mozart completely alters the temper of the music in the lovely minuet and the finale. Henri Ghéon, in his book on the composer, says of the finale that it "has a gayness of a dance and the fugal style seems only to intensify the rhythm... The inexhaustible fertility of Mozart's inventive power produces everything out of the first theme". This Rondo is indeed "of the richest maturity". —P.H.R.

Keyboard

BRAHMS: *Intermezzo in A (Op. 118, No. 2); Waltz in A flat*; **SCHUMANN:** *Träumerei*. Oscar Levant (piano). Columbia disc 72372-D, price \$1.00.

▲The two simpler pieces—*Träumerei* and the *A flat Waltz*—are played very prettily, with a clear, singing line, and with good taste. The recording, however, is at a low level; for some reason, Columbia's piano reproduction seldom turns out very lifelike. Levant plays the *Intermezzo* in a rather halting

manner; I do not find the flow and color I have heard from other fingers. The inner voices and counter-rhythms are not solved by the pianist, who from evidence up to date seems to be the homophonic type. A line on top and a bass below: fine; a few lines demanding integration, not so good. A Columbia release states that these three pieces are from the film *Song of Love*, if that is any inducement. —H.C.S.

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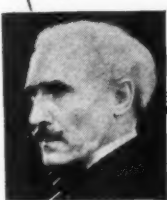
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CHOPIN: *Ballade No. 3 in A flat, Opus 47*; Guiomar Novaes (piano). Columbia disc 72345-D, price \$1.25.

▲Miss Novaes plays a thrice familiar work in a manner that is so enjoyable that I had no desire to make comparisons. I would have preferred the artist to have turned her talent to one of the other ballads, preferably the glorious one in *F minor*. It seems only yesterday that I heard a young lady struggling with this piece realizing anew that it is, as Huneker said, "the schoolgirl's delight, who familiarly toys with its demon, seeing only favor and prettiness in its elegant measures". Miss Novaes does not descend to "prettiness" nor coquettish charm. The acceleration of tempo toward the middle part of the second side may not have been indicated by the composer but it is not completely out of place, for it makes the ending less abrupt. The recording lacks brilliance in the upper registers and the bass is not as clean as I would have liked it. While the gradations of dynamics do justice to player they serve her less well in soft than in loud passages. —P.H.R.

CHOPIN: *Sonata in B flat minor (Op. 35)*; *Mazurka in A minor (Op. 17, No. 4)*. Robert Casadesus (piano). Columbia set MM-695, three discs, price \$4.00.

▲Last January, Victor released a superb version of this sonata, played by Rubinstein. Those particular discs filled a need, since no really adequate version was in the catalogues. At that time I felt—and still feel—that as a recording and performance the Rubinstein interpretation would take care of matters for some time. Now it has a competitor, of sorts, and a comparison between the two raises some pertinent questions.

The first thing that strikes one, on playing the first few measures of each, is the superiority of the Victor recording. In the latter the bass is clear and firm, the upper treble has a ring that does not sound tinny, and the over-all reproduction stacks up as one of the best piano recordings ever made. The Columbia version cannot weather the comparison—tubby bass, excess reverberation, a less brilliant level. Casadesus, it appears, is still having his usual bad luck with the engineers.

Then we come to the question of interpretations, and again the Columbia set cannot weather the comparison. I yield to none in my admiration for certain facets of Casadesus' playing, but Chopin never was one of his strong points. In all seriousness, and without going into too great detail, I would judge this one of Casadesus' poorest recorded performances. He evidences little sympathy or understanding for Chopin's idiom, his performance is small-scaled compared to Rubinstein's, and all of his undoubted sensitivity is wasted here. In my opinion, the old Kilenyi set, which the present one will supersede, is a superior album, both as interpretation and recording. —H.C.S.

DEBUSSY: *Preludes (Book II)*. E. Robert Schmitz (piano). Victor set M-1138, six ten-inch discs, price \$5.85.

▲The twelve *Preludes* that make up this volume are among Debussy's later works. Like much of the music that he composed after 1910, there are indications of oncoming sterility, manifested in the repetition of formulae. Certainly none but the most fanatic of Debussyites could find inspiration in tired-sounding pieces like *Feuilles mortes* or *Canope*. Only two or three in the set are really first-class Debussy—the effective and virtuosic *Feux d'artifice*, the mysterious *La terrasse des audiences du clair de lune*, and the colorful *La puerta del Vino*.

There have been several previous recordings of the *Second Book*. Gieseeking's is out of circulation; it has been replaced with a recent Columbia version by Casadesus. Victor's new set, with Schmitz, is a supplement to the *First Book*, which the same pianist recorded last year.

Neither the Victor nor Columbia is an especially brilliant piano recording, though both are passable. My own preference, interpretively, is toward the Casadesus, though Schmitz brings points with which to be reckoned. His conception of the music is intellectual, as compared to the intuitive aspects of Casadesus. The latter has more elegance, and a superior digital equipment which enables him to articulate the filigree of pieces like *Les tierces alternées* and *Les fées sont d'exquises danseuses* with greater daintiness. Schmitz brings to the music more of an individuality, with considerable strength of purpose. Whatever the lack of elegance, it



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Worthy of note is Schmitz's refusal to play up the purely sensuous elements of the music. As a result, one notices a masculine quality that very few interpreters bring to the *Preludes*. It should be added that those who own the Schmitz version of the *First Book* should by all means get his new set rather than the Casadesus, for consistency in style if nothing else. —H.C.S.

FALLA (arr. Rubinstein): *El Amor Brujo* —*Ritual Fire Dance and Dance of Terror*; Artur Rubinstein (piano). Victor 10-inch disc 10-1326, price 75c.

▲Both of these excerpts from de Falla's ballet lend themselves to pianistic treatment particularly when the player carefully observes all the marks as Rubinstein does. In the *Dance of Terror*, Rubinstein prefaces it with the short section in the score marked *El Aparecidio* (The Ghost) and the glissando passages are, of course, the entrance of the apparition. What follows is the terror the ghost evokes in his former sweetheart. The *Ritual Fire Dance*, which succeeds rather than precedes the *Dance of Terror* as on the record, is the young gypsy girl's dance to drive away the evil spirit. Rubinstein has the essential showmanship for this music and the skill to color it with some of the reminiscent effects of the orchestration. Both of these pieces were recorded by the pianist back in 1933 (disc 1596), but the old record does not begin to reveal the fullness of the pianist's conception as this one does.

—P.G.

LECUONA: *Malaguena*; and GOULD: *Guaracha*. Victor disc 11-9759, price \$1.00.

LISZT: *Concerto Themes* from the *Concerto No. 1 in E flat*; and SCHUMANN: *Concerto Themes* from the *Concerto in A minor*. Victor disc 11-9771, price \$1.00. Performed by Arthur Whittemore and Jack Lowe (duo-pianists).

▲The Lecuona and Gould make for diverting listening, but the two *Concerto Themes* are hardly my idea of what the composers intended. All four selections are arrangements of the two pianists and performed by them with an unmistakable enthusiasm. I wish I shared their enthusiasm in the second disc, but somehow it recalls to me the un-

pleasant *Heart of the Concerto, Symphony*, etc., which Victor once issued to assist those who like short cuts to education. —P.G.

LISZT: *Etude in D flat (Un Sospiro)*; and SCHUMANN: *Aufschwung, Op. 12, No. 2*; Ania Dorfmann (piano). Victor disc 11-9672, price \$1.00.

▲Miss Dorfman handles the Liszt with the firmest rhythm. The playing has a sharpness with a sonority, and the sentiment is felt but not over-stressed. The label has the work as *Un Sospiro* but actually Liszt called it *Concert Etude in D flat*. Harold Bauer and Egon Petri have played it previously for domestic recordings, but neither of their discs projects the tonal brightness of this one. In the Schumann, which translated means "Soaring", Miss Dorfman gives rhythmic energy to the subject of the music in a well-ordered and intelligently phrased performance. The recording is clear but the tonal character of the piano varies, especially on the high end where the quality seems thin and wiry. —P.H.R.

PURCELL: *Eight Harpsichord Suites*; Sylvia Marlowe. Gramophone Shop set No. 2, five plastic discs, price \$11.50.

▲Purcell's harpsichord suites were published by his widow the year after his death (1696) under the title of *A Choice Collection of Lessons for the Harpsichord or Spinnet*. They were dedicated to one of his pupils—Princess Anne of Denmark, who later became Queen. In his second volume of the *History of Music through Eye and Ear* (Columbia set), Percy Scholes included the first and briefest of these suites as an "epitome of that Suite form which dominated instrumental music for 250 years—from about 1500, when the Italian Lute composers began to publish such things, to about 1750, when the careers of Bach and Handel (who both wrote magnificent keyboard suites) were closing". The inclusion of various dance forms in the suite, Mr. Scholes tells us, was governed by the prevailing usage in the ball-rooms of the time. In Purcell's time, the Allemande and the Courante had become the mode. "And with ball-room fashion went the fashion of the drawing-

room," says Mr. Scholes. "Young ladies now liked to play Allemandes and Courantes on their Virginals, and composers met the demand with a due supply." So we find Purcell in his suites writing in these forms, and seven of his suites contain both, while one, the Sixth, omits the Courante in favor of a Hornpipe. Scholes calls the *First Suite* "a compact little trifle". Westrup in his book on the composer states that Purcell's handling of the dance forms is often "slight and sometimes inconclusive . . . but the best of them are worthy predecessors of Bach's French and English suites". That Purcell wrote these suites for one of his pupils, suggests he intended them for domestic use by the young ladies of the day.

Miss Marlowe plays these little works with rhythmic impetus and technical facility, employing proper ornamentations and varying tonal registrations. The recording is excellently contrived on good plastic material.

—P.H.R.

SCHUMANN: *Arabesque, Opus 18*; Jose Iturbi (piano). Victor 10-inch disc 10-1035, price 75c.

▲Last month we had Rubinstein's interpretation of this popular Schumann piece (in Victor set 1149), and to our way of thinking it is preferable to the present performance. Mr. Iturbi's brittle pianism seems less suitable to Schumann's music than the warmer and more romantic performance of Rubinstein. Though the spirit of Chopin seems to hover at Rubinstein's elbow, one finds he brings more appropriate nuance to his playing than does Iturbi. There is better reproduction in this record than in the Rubinstein, but my preference remains with the latter despite its higher surface sound.—P.G.

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Violin

DEBUSSY (trans. Hartmann): *La fille aux cheveux de lin*; and FALLA (trans. Kochanski): *Jota* from *Seven Popular Spanish Songs*; Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). Victor 10-inch disc 10-1324, price 75c.

▲Heifetz plays the familiar Debussy-Hartmann piece with silken luster, but its tender poetry seems almost too bright on his violin, especially since the piano part is submerged. Almost all of de Falla's *Seven Popular Songs* lend themselves to transcription for the violin, and the *Jota* is in many ways a "natural" with the imitative guitar effects and the broad melody. Heifetz plays it with the tonal and executive finesse that is his to command. Good recording. —P.H.R.

GODOWSKY (arr. Heifetz): *Alt-Wein*; and DRIGO (arr. Heifetz): *Valse bleuette*; Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). Victor 10-inch disc, 10-1345, price 75c.

▲Godowsky's *Alt-Wein* deserved a better partner, but it should be noted that Heifetz plays the sentimental *Valse bleuette* with admirable artistic restraint. —P.G.

HEIFETZ ENCORES: *Il pleure dans mon coeur* (Debussy-Hartmann); *Tango* (Pol-dowsky); *Gavottes I and II* from *English Suite No. 6* (Bach-Heifetz); *Folk Dance* (Beethoven-Heifetz); *Pantomime* from *El Amor Brujo* (de Falla-Kochanski); *Cantilena Asturiana* (Nin); *Corcovado* from *Saudades do Brasil* (Milhaud); *Scherzo* from *Piano Trio No. 1* (Mendelssohn-Heifetz); *Tempo di Valse* (Arensky-Heifetz); Jascha Heifetz (violin) and Emanuel Bay (piano). Victor set M-1158, four 10-inch discs, price \$3.75.

▲It is debatable whether it was the wisest thing to place these records in an album or to have them issued singularly. As a short recital, the musical worth of the set leaves much to be desired. On the other hand, any one of these records fitted into a program—better devised by the listener—should prove more enjoyable. Heifetz plays them all

with his characteristic tonal splendor and technical proficiency, but the spotlight is thrown on his violin and the piano does not always receive the importance it should. However, the violin of Heifetz has a magic of its own, and his many admirers will unquestionably welcome these new additions to his recorded repertoire. —P.G.

Voice

BEETHOVEN: *Scottish Songs*; Richard Dyer-Bennet (tenor), with Ignace Strassfogel (piano), Stefan Frankel (violin), Jascha Bernstein (cello). Concert Hall Society set 9. Limited Edition.

▲In his review of Concert Hall's unlimited edition of Beethoven's *Irish Songs*, Mr. Miller mentions the fact that the composer also arranged a goodly number of Scottish and Welsh Songs. As in the case of the *Irish Songs*, it was the same George Thomson, Secretary of the "Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufacturers in Scotland", who assigned the composer to arrange these. Let us quote from the notes to the set, written by Mr. Miller. Beethoven, he tells us, "like the distinguished poets Robert Burns, James Hogg, William Smyth, and Sir Walter Scott, actually performed the work for money—and not enough of that, as he complained in letters to his employer, George Thomson. According to the agreement he was to supply piano accompaniments for the songs, with violin and cello parts optional, but as he warmed to his task his unsurpassed skill in chamber music took possession of him, and the settings became little gems of their kind, with the optional instruments becoming integral parts of the tenor-and-trio ensemble."

Many of these songs are unknown "except to students and musicologists" and since they are really delightful in their folkish way, Concert Hall is to be congratulated for making them available on records, but it is a pity that the set was limited to subscribers only. The same group of artists, heard in the *Irish Songs*, officiate here and the performances are a model of clarity from the recording aspect. Dyer-Bennet sings with

poise and taste—yet bringing to his interpretations a sense of that intimacy and charm which we find in all of his folk song renditions. —P.H.R.

BISHOP: *Home, Sweet Home*; and MOORE: *The Last Rose of Summer*; Dorothy Maynor (soprano), with George Schick at the piano. Victor 10-inch disc, price 75c.

▲These are simple "heart songs" which should be sung with a natural feeling, both musical and poetic. Miss Maynor seems a little awed in her delivery of both songs, as though she were thinking of the long line of famous singers that came before her. —J.N.

BIXIO: *Mamma* and *Se vuoi goder la vita*; Beniamino Gigli (tenor), with Orchestra, conducted by Dino Olivieri. Victor 10-inch disc 10-1339, price 75c.

▲There is a new Italian film called *Madre*, in which Gigli is featured. These two typical Italian popular songs are sung by the tenor in the film. The record will appeal to those who see and like the film. Neither song is of great importance, although melodically pleasing. Gigli sings them both with all the ease and beauty of his lyric art. The recording is excellent. —P.G.

DONIZETTI: *La Favorita—O mio Fernando*; Nan Merriman (mezzo-soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Frieder Weissman. Victor disc 11-9793, price \$1.00.

▲Miss Merriman is an intelligent singer of musicianly perception. One admires her delivery of this long and difficult aria, although this performance is hardly a compelling one. It is seldom one hears a completely successful performance of this music since it makes varying designs on the singer's equipment which cannot always satisfactorily be met. The composer aimed for an aria in the grand manner, with a recitative, a sustained cantilena, and a dramatic *allegro*. It is hardly a great operatic scene because it lacks subtlety and true dramatic import. Some singers, endowed with more vocal opulence than Miss Merriman, rely on their voice to sustain the listener's interest, but they frequently indulge in sentimental excesses and dramatic blatancy which Miss Merriman wisely avoids.

In my opinion the singer could have chosen a better vehicle to exploit her talents, and it is to be hoped that she will be heard in other arias in recording. The musical direction of Mr. Weissmann is competent. —J.N.

GIORDANO: *Andrea Chenier—Come un bel di di maggio*; and VERDI: *Un Ballo in Maschera—Di' te se fedele* (*Barcarola*); Jussi Bjoerling (tenor) with Orchestra, conducted by Nils Grevillius. Victor 10-inch disc 10-1323, price \$1.00.

▲Bjoerling has assimilated the Italian style in a more appreciable manner than in his earliest records. In his handling of the language his assurance is well demonstrated, particularly in the Verdi *Barcarolle*. The *Andrea Chenier* selection (coupled differently) was issued in Italy and one critic in Milan praised the tenor's delivery. And this was merited, for Bjoerling sings smoothly, and also holds onto a few high notes in the approved manner of Italian tenors. I think the Verdi side is one of the best things Bjoerling has done vocally for the phonograph; there is an animation and youthful ardor in his singing which makes it enjoyable. I wish he had not taken each *fermata*, indicated by the composer so literally, for they break too much the rhythmic flow of the music. Mr. Grevillius gives the tenor fine orchestral accompaniments, and the recording is excellently achieved. —J.N.

HANDEL: *The Messiah* (Abridged); sung by Lura Stover, soprano, Lydia Summers, contralto, Harold Haugh, tenor. J. Alden Edkins, basso, The Handel Oratorio Society (Augustana Choir) Brynolf Lundholm, organ, Clarence Snyder, organ, direction of Henry Veld. Bibletone set T, four 10-inch discs, \$4.70.

CHURCH SOLOS: *How Beautiful upon the Mountain; Great Peace Have They*; sung by Lura Stover, soprano; *Open the Gates of the Temple; Calvary*; sung by J. Alden Edkins, basso; *The City Foursquare; Ninety-First Psalm*; sung by Lydia Summers, contralto; *I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say; That Sweet Story of Old*; sung by Harold Haugh, tenor; all with organ accompaniment. Bibletone set U, four 10-inch discs, \$4.50.

▲Bibletone is a young recording company dedicated to the publication of sacred music. The first of these two albums gives a cross-section of Handel's great oratorio in the kind of performance we might hear from so many choir lofts around Christmas time. To be sure, not many churches boast such a chorus as this selected from the Augustana Choir, nor are such well established soloists available in smaller communities. The recording favors the solo voices over the chorus, but it is generally clear enough. The cutting of both choruses and arias is drastic, but there is enough here to satisfy those who like their performances streamlined. The intention has been to retain the continuity of the text.

The second set is made up of standard sacred songs so well known to congregations that it has not been considered necessary to give the composers' names on the labels. I suspect there is a large public who will be given considerable pleasure by having the messages of these songs brought into their homes, and I am sure they will find the singing—in the time tradition—very much to their taste.

—P.L.M.

MASSNET: *Thais*—*Mort de Thais*; Dorothy Kirsten (soprano) and Robert Merrill (baritone), and PUCCINI: *Manon Lescaut*—*In quelle trine mobide*; Dorothy Kirsten. Both with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Victor disc 11-9782, price \$1.00.

▲Miss Kirsten has admirably assimilated the style of Massenet's essentially French music. Her singing seems freer and more relaxed than in her recent *Bohème* record and the voice is less shrill. Massenet wrote *Thais* for the American soprano, Sybil Sanderson, who made her debut at the Opéra Comique in 1889 shortly after the Paris Exposition opened. The Eiffel Tower was a feature of the exposition and Miss Sanderson's high clear tones (her range extended to G in altissimo) were referred to as "Eiffel Tower top-notes". To accommodate the soprano's high tones, Massenet extended the range of the Death Scene twice to high D. Most sopranos omit these high notes, but Miss Kirsten ascends easily and naturally to them.

Mr. Merrill, as the impassioned Athanaël, is rich toned but hardly fervent in his pleas.

One can be glad, however, that the baritone submerged his part, for this aria is one of the big moments in the opera for the soprano utilizing anew the melody of the saccharine *Intermezzo*. Mr. Morel handles the orchestral direction ideally, it floats atmospherically in the background and avoids over-sentimentalization.

The *Manon Lescaut* aria is sung with freedom of expression and just the right amount of emotional intensity. From the evidence of the record, Miss Kirsten should make an excellent Manon and one hopes at some later date she will record the brilliant and difficult *L'ora o tirsi*, which no one has successfully essayed since Frances Alda in the old acoustic days.

—P.H.R.

MOZART: *Le Nozze di Figaro*—*Non so piu cosa son* and *Recitative and Aria—Deh vieni, non tardar* (sung in Italian); *The Abduction from the Seraglio*—*Tortures unabating* (2 parts); Eleanor Steber (soprano) with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Jean Paul Morel. Victor set M or DM-1157, two discs, price \$2.85.

▲Miss Steber's vocal achievement in these records varies. In the *Figaro* selections her singing is poised and often exquisite, but in the highly difficult *Seraglio* aria she treats a dramatic scene as though it were simply lyric song. While the English text must hamper her on occasion, there is wisdom in using the language in which she learned the part. Her failure to emphasize the climactic parts reveals her inability to cope with the dramatic intensity of the music.

It is in Susana's lovely aria where Miss Steber proves herself a true Mozart performer. Her singing has both appeal and beauty of tone, even though the emotion is not all persuasive. Well sung too is Cherubino's air, although temperamentally the rendition is hardly true to the character, and the interpolated high note at the end is out of place. There are few singers who can successfully move from the ingratiating melodies of *The Marriage of Figaro* to the fiendishly difficult aria from *The Abduction* and acquit themselves as credibly as Miss Steber does. The excellent recording of the voice and the orchestra contribute much by the way of enjoyment to this set.

—P.H.R.

OPERATIC DUETS: *La Boheme*—*In un coupe*, and *O Mimi, tu piu non torni* (Puccini); *La Forza del Destino*—*Solenna in quest'ora* and *Invano Alvaro* (2 sides) (Verdi); Jan Peerce (tenor) and Leonard Warren (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Jean Paul Morel and Erich Leinsdorf. Victor set M or DM-1156, two discs, price \$2.85.

▲The music in this album elicits a nostalgia for the ear of Caruso, Amato, and Scotti, but is quickly dissipated once the records are heard. The splendid quality of the recording provides a satisfaction not to be found in any previous discs. How closely Peerce has identified himself with the role of Rudolfo is borne out in his fine, lyric singing in the first record. Taking the music from the opening of the fourth act through the duet, in which Rudolfo and Marcello recall their separate loved ones, both singers achieve some deft touches of characterization.

One could wish for these singers to record the complete *La Forza del Destino*. Vocally they are far more satisfying than those in the imported version of the complete opera. The Caruso-Scotti version of *Solenne in quest'ora* is beyond a doubt one of the greatest sung duets ever recorded, but there was a lack of essential contrast between the two voices which is not found here. The present singers must have been aware of the comparisons awaiting them and accordingly have been impelled with an appropriate emotional fervor. Theirs is not only a splendid performance of this famous duet but a thoroughly enjoyable one. The duet from the last act in which Don Carlo riles the newly made Friar, Alvaro, into fighting a duel, is equally well sung. Peerce is cleverer here in his characterization than Warren. The latter relies on his splendid voice to serve him and does not give emphasis to the emotion as Amato did. The orchestral accompaniments are excellently handled in the *Boheme* and fourth act duet from *La Forza* by Mr. Morel, and less satisfactorily in the *Solenne* by Mr. Leinsdorf.

—P.H.R.

PONCHIELLI: *La Gioconda*—*Barcarolla*; and **LEONCABALLO:** *I Pagliacci*—*Prologo*; Leonard Warren (baritone), with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra, con-

ducted by Jean Paul Morel in *Gioconda*, and the RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Frider Weissmann in *Pagliacci*. Victor disc 11-9790, price \$1.00.

▲The old-time baritones who recorded the *Gioconda* aria did not have the realistic and sensuously pleasant quality of reproduction which is found in this disc and in most instances the chorus was not used. The richly dark-hued voice of Mr. Warren is pleasantly employed, though he does not succeed in bringing to this aria the fervent brilliance and ringing tonal quality that some of the older singers—like Amato and Stracciari—did. However, few would deny that the performance is a fine one with its well sung chor-

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al part and a considerable improvement over older ones. Mr. Warren's rendition of the familiar Prologue from *Pagliacci* is opulent in tone and musicianly in treatment, and compares favorably with any version on records. Both Mr. Morel and Mr. Weissmann supply excellent orchestral support, and the recording is realistic and ideally balanced.

—J.N.

SCHUBERT: *Der Tod und das Mädchen*, Op. 7, No. 3; and *Wohin*, Op. 25, No. 2. Marian Anderson, contralto, with piano accompaniments by Franz Rupp. Victor 10-inch disc, 10-1327, 75c.

▲Miss Anderson's earlier recording of *Der Tod und das Mädchen* (Victor 1862) has long stood not only as the best version of the song available but one of her very finest achievements. The eery quality of her voice as she pronounced the words of *Death* is something that lingers in the memory. Perhaps if we did not know that masterpiece of hers this new performance would be greeted with greater enthusiasm. But here the quality we have just been admiring gives way to a fuller and perhaps a steadier tone, and the dramatic projection becomes mere singing. Too, the voice of the *Maiden* is less agitated. And it should be added that the playing of the piano part by Kosti Vehanen had an appropriate heaviness which is lacking in the performance of Franz Rupp.

The companion piece this time is the second song from *Die schöne Müllerin*, the kind of melody always effective in Miss Anderson's voice. Her singing is accordingly neat and smooth, if a little deliberate. The recording balance is too much in favor of the singing. The surfaces on both sides are rather high.

—P.L.M.

TRADITIONAL: *Dark Eyes* (sung in Russian); **RUSSIAN FOLK SONG:** *The Volga Legend* (sung in English and Russian); **CADMAN:** *At Dawning*; **ROMBERG:** *One Alone* from *The Desert Song*; **KALMAN:** *Play Gypsies, Dance Gypsies* from *Countess Maritza*; **MALOTTE:** *Song of the Open Road* (the latter four sung in English); Igor Gorin (baritone), with Orchestra conducted by Maximilian Pilzer. Victor set M-1125, three 10-inch discs, price \$3.00. ■

▲Nature has endowed Mr. Gorin with a rich and plenteous voice. I have never heard the baritone in opera but he suggests strongly via the record that he might have considerable ability as an actor, for in all of his songs he plays for effects in the manner of the singing actor. All of these selections have figured prominently in Mr. Gorin's radio programs and those who have heard and admired his renditions of them over the air will unquestionably welcome this album release, which bears the title of *An Igor Gorin Program*. Since the baritone has shown himself in the past a capable interpreter of more serious songs, it would be well if he gave us another program—perhaps a group of his favorite Tchaikovsky or other Russian composer's songs. Like radio audiences, record ones are divided into two groups, and Mr. Gorin could profitably serve both. The recording here is strikingly realistic in its brilliance of tone, both vocally and instrumentally. Mr. Pilzer shows his mettle in handling orchestral accompaniments for a singer who has definite ideas of his own. For my own part, I would have preferred it had the singer been less concerned with "effects" and more with spontaneity, but with a voice like his, Mr. Gorin could hardly go entirely wrong.

—J.N.

VERDI: *La Traviata*—*Di Provenza il mar*; and **BIZET:** *Carmen*—*Entrance, Song and Exit of the Toreador*; Robert Merrill (baritone) with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Jean Paul Morel in the *Traviata*, and with RCA Victor Chorale and Orchestra, conducted by Erich Leinsdorf in the *Carmen*. Victor disc 11-9794, price \$1.00.

▲Alec Robertson, in his review in the *The Gramophone* of the recent complete set of *La Traviata* (issued by Columbia) said in part: "Violetta's great outburst at the end of her duet with Alfredo [in the second act] is thrilling and can be remembered while enduring the barrel-organ accompaniment of one of the dreariest arias Verdi ever wrote, *Di Provenza il mar*." Mr. Robertson's further comment that he could not pretend that Silveri (the baritone in the Columbia set) reconciled him to this aria expresses my reaction to the present performance. Merrill sings with tonal richness but he gives me the impression that he considers this aria no

more than a vehicle to exploit his vocal endowment. *Di Provenza il mar* has always seemed to me an anticlimax in the opera. Heard in the concert hall or on records, it has no true enduring merit. I think Robertson put his finger on it when he spoke of the "barrel-organ accompaniment". It does become unendurable after a while. One man's reaction is not of a necessity another's, so if you like this aria do not let me dissuade you from hearing this recording—which is excellently contrived.

The reverse face is drawn from the Victor set of excerpts from *Carmen*, issued last December. I agree with Mr. Miller's contention that Merrill has the spirit of the flamboyant Toreador, but he does not begin to make as a compelling a characterization as did some of the great singers of the past. This is a special recording for Mr. Merrill's many admirers and as such should serve a good purpose. —P.H.R.

WAGNER: *Die Meistersinger—Am stillen Herd and Preislied*; Set Svanholm (tenor), with RCA Victor Orchestra, conducted by Frieder Weissmann. Victor disc 11-9791, price \$1.00.

▲ There is vigor and forthrightness to Mr. Svanholm's deliver of Walther's music which is more suitable to the *Preislied* than to *Am stillen Herd*. Yet the latter reveals some niceties of expression which Torsten Ralf in his recent recording failed to convey. Had Victor provided Svanholm with a chorus in the *Preislied*, his performance might well have been the most desirable on records for he sings this music with clear articulation, fine phrasing and no unpleasant strain on high notes. The orchestral direction of Mr. Weissmann is appropriately vehement, but one feels a larger ensemble would have better served both him and the singer. The recording is full and realistic. —J.N.

THE WHIFFENPOOF SONG, and THE SWEETHEART OF SIGMA CHI; Charles Kullman (tenor) with Male Chorus and the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, conducted by Julius Berger. Columbia 10-inch disc, 4500-M, price \$1.00.

▲ Mr. Kullman who attended Yale University sings these songs with the fervor and conviction of a campus undergraduate who

is endowed with a fine tenor voice. It is evident from this record why he was recently given an honorary membership to the Whiffenpoof Society, an undergraduate organization. Aided by a good male chorus and—of all ensembles—the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, he turns out the best performances of these songs on record to date. —P.G.

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For its second year, Concert Hall Society announces a subscription series of twelve sets and three alternate albums. The number of subscribers for the Second Annual Series has increased from 2,000 to 3,000. The choice of records in the new series is the result of the selection of the Society's members. The three alternate albums may be substituted for any album of the new list. The twelve sets to be issued are: Dvorak's *String Quartet in C major, Op. 61*, played by the Gordon String Quartet; Couperin's *Suite du Sixième Ordre*, performed by Paul Loyonnet; Haydn's *Sonata in G major for Flute and Piano*, played by René Le Roy and Paul Loyonnet; Scarlatti's *Sonatas for Harpsichord*, performed by Ralph Kirkpatrick;

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In The Popular Vein

By Enzo Archetti

The Lady From 29 Palms and *The Turntable Song*; Andrews Sisters with Vic Schoen and His Orchestra. Decca 23976.

● This is obviously a companion of the Bing record mentioned here last month, probably made at the same session. A skillfully made *turntable*. But are the pieces worth all the trouble?

Cecilia and *S'posin*; Erskine Butterfield and His Orchestra. Musicraft 101.

● Note this is Erskine, not Billy. Both numbers are revivals such as are very popular at the moment. But the treatment is very different from what was originally intended, and the result is delightful. *S'posin* reminds one of Fats Waller's arrangement but it doesn't quite match it for rhythm and spirit. The recording is forward.

Box Car Blues and *Hello, Baby*; Wingy Manone and His Orchestra. Vocals by Johnny Mercer and Wingy. Capitol B442.

● Both original compositions and original in treatment as well, especially the blues side. There's only little of Wingy's strangled, dry-toned trumpet playing here. Most of the disc is vocal, neatly backed with good rhythm. Recording—good.

A Jam Session At Victor and *Say It Simple*; Jack Teagarden's Big Eight (Personnel: Jack Teagarden, vocal and trombone; Cliff Strickland, tenor sax; Peanuts Hucko, clarinet; Max Kaminsky, trumpet; Gene Schroeder, piano; Chuck Wayne, guitar; Jack Lesberg, bass; Dave Tough, drums) Victor 40-0138.

● Not much music but the rhythm and playing are first rate. Good for an exciting moment, but easily forgotten.

Don't Bother Matilda and *Dorothy Went To Bathe*; The Lion, with Gerald Clark and His Original Calypsos. Musicraft 502.

● Genuine Calypso by one of its best exponents (imported). A little of this can go a long way. Maybe, it's the recording, but I couldn't catch all the words—and the words are all-important.

Don't Tell Me and Every So Often; Les Brown and His Orchestra. Vocals by Ray Kellogg and Eileen Wilson. Columbia 37557.

● Les Brown always does a neat job, no matter what the material. You won't miss much if you skip this but it does have some mellow trombone work.

How Lucky You Are and *On The Avenue*; Hal Derwin and His Orchestra, with The Coeds. Capitol B446.

● Even at this writing, this one is very popular in the juke-boxes—especially *On The Avenue*. And small wonder: it is humorous and original in treatment. The other side is more on the sentimental side—in waltz time. Recording—excellent.

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot and *Speaking of Angels*; Capitol 375. *Chi-Baba, Chi-Baba* and *Aintcha Ever Comin' Back*; Capitol 419. *It Takes A Long Train With A Red Caboose* and *Just An Old Love of Mine*; Capitol B445. Peggy Lee, with Dave Barbour and His Orchestra.

● The luscious Peggy here alternates very effectively between the purely rhythmic and the purely sentimental. *Swing Low* is an example of the first and *Just An Old Love*, of the latter. It's up to you to decide which Peggy you like better. For my part, I'll take the rhythmic. Dave Barbour deserves a good share of the success of these discs. His support is excellent in the best jazz sense and his guitar solos are highlights in the pictures. In spite of all this, *Chi-*

Baba, Chi-Baba still sounds like a phony and Peggy's phony Italian doesn't help it any.

Whiffenpoof Song and Doin' You Good; Lawrence Welk and His Champagne Music. Vocals by Bobby Beers, Joan Mowery, and Chorus. Decca 23981.

● Robert Merrill started something with his splendid Victor recording of the *Whiffenpoof Song*. This version is effective, too, though the strict waltz tempo tends to stifle it. The reverse is a revival of a Boyd Senter oldie, with a corny trumpet part which would do credit to Clyde McCoy.

Atlantic Jump and Bunny; Charlie Barnet and His Orchestra. Apollo 1065.

● The first is a Barnet composition. It's a tear-up-the-floor, burn-down-the-house kind of work, with terrific rhythm and equally terrific solos, especially on sax and trumpet. It leaves you breathless. The reverse is tamer but still good jazz.

Apple Blossom Wedding and I'm Sorry I Didn't Say I'm Sorry; Phil Brito, with Ted Dale and His Orchestra. Musicraft 15112. *Tango Della Rosa and O Marenariello*; Phil Brito, with Orchestra under the direction of Walter Gross. Musicraft 456.

● A very pleasant singer with a style. Definitely worth hearing. The second disc is sung in Italian, rather—in dialect—and this time it is sung as if the words meant something, which they do.

O Sole Mio and Stumbling; The Ernie Filice Quintet (Personnel: Ernie Filice, accordion; Dick Anderson, clarinet; Larry Breen, bass; Bob Sandy, drums; George Smith, guitar) Capitol B453.

● All the evidence pointed to a good disc but the deadly slow pace at which *O Sole Mio* is played robs it of its sunny vitality and *Stumbling* just doesn't go anywhere.

Gene Krupa and His Orchestra; Columbia Album C-138, 4-10" discs. *Gene's Boogie and Disc Jockey Jump*; Gene Krupa and His Orchestra. Columbia 37589.

● The Vice-President-In-Charge at Columbia has done another good job of assembling representative records into an album. These are some of Gene's best: *Tuxedo Junction, Boogie Blues, Drum Boogie, Leave Us Leap, Let Me Off Uptown, Drummin' Man, That's What You Think and Knock Me A Kiss*. The single is cut from the same pattern and it should be a jump-fan's delight.

Popular Organ Solos by Don Baker; Columbia Album C-137, 4-10" discs.

● The program is light and interesting—most of it from popular Broadway shows and operettas—but you have to swallow a lot of peculiar organ technique to get at the meat of the business.

Tuxedo Junction; Erskine Hawkins and His Orchestra. Victor Album P-181, 4-10" discs.

● The Vice-President-in-Charge-of-Repressings for Special-Albums at Victor is no slouch, either. He knows what's best, too, even without a sales total slip for a guide. *Tuxedo Junction* was the excuse for the album but the rest of the numbers are equally good, if not better, as jazz. There's *Cherry, After Hours, Sweet Georgia Brown, Song of the Wanderer, Don't Cry, Baby, Tippin' In, and I've Got A Right To Cry*. In fact, in my opinion, *After Hours* is tops. Throughout, we hear some first rate rhythm and virtuoso playing, especially on trumpet and

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sax. If you need a sample to convince you, try *After Hours* and *Sweet Georgia Brown*. None of the recordings is old enough to show age, yet.

Favorite Songs From Famous Musicals, Volume II; Frances Greer, soprano; Jimmy Carroll, tenor; with Dudley King and His Orchestra. Victor Album P-177, 4-10" discs.

● A particularly happy blend of music, voices, orchestra, and recording make this album a thoroughly enjoyable half hour of listening.

Waltz Time; Abe Lyman and His Orchestra. Columbia Album C-136, 4-10" discs.

● The Abe Lyman style of waltz playing is now thoroughly familiar from his many radio programs. This album is in the same vein, with just a bit more emphasis on the nostalgic.

Theme Songs, Volume II; Columbia Album C-140, 4-10" discs.

● Frankie Carle, Gene Krupa, Claude Thornhill, Les Brown, Xavier Cugat, Dick Jurgens, Elliot Lawrence, and Ray Noble are represented in the second volume of the series. Music and records are both already very familiar but it's a nice convenience to have them collected into an album.

Hawaiian Melodies; Harry Owens and His Royal Hawaiians, with vocals by Hilo Hattie, Gil Mershon, and Eddie Bush. Columbia Album C-141, 4-10" discs.

● Most of the numbers in this album sound authentic but I cannot quite reconcile the union of genuine Hawaiian music with modern dance rhythms. Maybe it is because I once heard some genuine Hawaiian music.

Songs of Lucienne Boyer; Lucienne Boyer, chanteuse, with Orchestra. Columbia Album M-694, 4-10" discs.

● Surely, there can be hardly a person with a love for things French who has not a special niche in his heart for Lucienne Boyer. Her suave, petite voice has endeared her to thousands and around her style has grown a new kind of French chanson. Nothing very important, perhaps, but *tres chic*! In this album, Columbia has collected the songs which are associated with her in everyone's minds and which, often, she made popular. The choices are happy ones.

Forgiving You and Love and the Weather; Columbia 37588. *Strange What A Song Can Do and My Friend Irma;* Columbia 37810 Harry James and his orchestra. Vocal by Marion Morgan and Buddy Di Vito.

● There is nothing musically important in all four sides but each has an attractive feature. The first has Buddy Di Vito in a vocal which would do Sinatra credit. The second has some splendid brass work. The third has Marion Morgan with some fine piano and trumpet backing, and the fourth has a bounce which should

delight young dancers. All have at least one good trumpet chorus by James and some of the best recording Columbia has given us lately.

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AUCTION: My collection of instrumental recordings—mostly cut-out prewar items and some imports. List on request. John Lyko, 5226 W. 24 St., Cicero 50, Ill.

SALES LIST AVAILABLE: Collection of 3000 rare vocal and operatic records. Ask for special wants. Delano, 349 Lindenwood, Ambler, Pa.

Early Autumn—Beguine and Oh You Beautiful Doll; Claude Thornhill and his Orchestra. Vocal by Gene Williams and Fran Warren. Columbia 37593.

●The Beguine lacks energy but creates a pleasant mood picture. The reverse is another revival, done with a tongue-in-the-cheek manner. Claude imitates very cleverly the back-room-in-the-corner-saloon pianist of another day.

Elmer's Tune and Ragtime Joe—Dick Jurgens and his Orchestra. Vocal by Eddy Howard. Columbia 30811.

●*Elmer's Tune*, very engagingly done in this version, has cheek. Both sides are take-offs on popular musical styles of an earlier day in jazz. Good fun—if you are old enough to get the point. Recording—not quite up to snuff.

Forsaking All Others and Civilization—Victor 20-2400. *Say It With A Slap and Fun and Fancy Free*; Victor 20-2401. First three sides by Louis Prima and his Orchestra, with vocal by Prima and chorus. The fourth side by Phil Harris and his Orchestra with vocal by Harris.

●Louis' strangled vocalizing has no place in music of like *Forsaking All Others*. In *Civilization* (subtitled: Bongo, Bongo, Bongo) he returns to more familiar ground. If you saw Walt Disney's latest you'll enjoy *Say It With A Slap* because it will remind you of one of the funniest moments in the picture although this version is hardly the ideal one. The other side, from the same picture, is right up Phil Harris' alley.

Rumba At the Waldorf—Rumba and *Un Poquito de Amor*—Beguine; Xavier Cugat and his Orchestra. Vocal by Dorothy Porter. Columbia 37829.

●The rumba is a Cugat original. The master of Latin-American rhythm plays it perfectly.

The reverse is not far from being as good. A must for lovers of this kind of music!

The Old Piano Tuner and Just An Old Love of Mine; Tommy Dorsey and his Orchestra. Vocal by Stuart Foster, Lucy Ann Polk and the Town Criers. Victor 20-2371.

●Both tunes would have been better with more of Tommy Dorsey's sentimental trombone. Pleasant listening though, and good recording.

Jumpy Stumpy and Sentimental Rhapsody; Les Brown and his Orchestra. Vocal by Eileen Wilson. Columbia 37830.

●The first is a good jump piece—all instrumental—and Les Brown plays it very well. Jump music has a special niche in his heart. The *Rhapsody* is based on a theme from *Street Scene* but Kurt Weill doesn't get any label credit. The piece is strongly derivative from Duke Ellington, but without the Duke's genius for making something out of nothing.

Emperor Waltz and The Stars Will Remember—Skitch Henderson and his Orchestra. Capitol B 455.

●Very slick—but I'm sure the Strauss waltz in this jazzed up version will not sit well with those who love the original. The reverse is an indifferent thing, with a lugubrious vocal by Glen Sterling.

The Stanley Steamer and Julie—Victor 20-2425. *Begin the Beguine and The Christmas Song*—Victor 20-2478. Tony Martin, with Earle Hagen, and his Orchestra and Chorus.

●These are outstanding discs by Tony Martin. *The Christmas Song* will probably rival Sinatra's and King Cole Trio's for popularity, and *Begin the Beguine* will give Sinatra's disc a run for its money. The other record is less interesting musically although entertaining. Recording is excellent.

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946, OF THE AMERICAN RECORD GUIDE published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1947.—State of New York, County of Westchester ss. Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Peter Hugh Reed, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the publisher of The American Record Guide and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the act of August 23, 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (section 537, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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The Stars Will Remember and *Christmas Dreaming*; Frank Sinatra with Orchestra under direction of Axel Storaaahl. Columbia 31809.

● A swooney and a sentimental one both sung as only Sinatra can sing such things. There's something vaguely familiar about *The Stars* but I cannot point my finger on it. *Christmas Dreaming* is sub-titled *A Little Early This Year*; and it is. But it will be a welcome bit of sentimentalizing in the *White Christmas* vein. Recording—perfect.

Dream Street and *Get Up Those Stairs, Mademoiselle*—Victor 20-2305. *Charge It To Iaddy* and *Jealous*—Victor 20-2157; Deep River Boys.

● A male quartet with piano, guitar, bass and drums—plus a style. These two discs give a good cross-section of their interesting work. *Jealous* is another revival obviously intended to rival the now famous *Peg O' My Heart*—and its very well done.

Every So Often and *Come In Out Of the Rain*—Delta Rhythm Boys with Frank Comstock and his Orchestra. Victor 20-2365.

● This disc could have been grouped with those of the Deep River Boys because its very much like them except for musical interest.

The Turntable Song and *%okomo, Indiana*—Four Chicks and Chuck, with Bob Haggart and his Orchestra. MGM-10070.

● This could be called the distaff counterpart of the group represented by the Deep River Boys, the Delta Rhythm Boys, etc., except the style lacks subtlety. The singing is forward and rhythmic—the accompaniment first rate—much better than the usual run.

You Oughta Be In Pictures and *Muskrat Ramble*; Eddie Miller's Orchestra (Personnel: Eddie Miller, tenor sax; Nappy Lamare, guitar; Matty Matlock, clarinet; Irvin Verret, trombone; Wingy Manone, trumpet; Stan Wrightsman, piano; Budd Hatch, bass, Ray Banduc, drums); Capitol A 40039. *Grasshoppers In My Pillow* and *Sweet Mary Blues*, sung by Leadbelly. Capitol 40038. *God Be With You and I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me*; The St. Paul Church Choir of Los Angeles. J. Earl Hines, Director and Soloist. Capitol 40018.

● Capitol continues to expand its Americana catalog, mostly with run-of-the-mill cowboy ballads, hill-billy music, blues, and country dances. Occasionally there is something outstanding—such as the three discs listed above. The Miller record is genuinely improvisational jazz, well-played by a group of first line men. Eddie Miller's sax hogs the spotlight a bit but the other men also have their innings. The Leadbelly disc is earthy music, sung and played only as he can. Both are traditional blues

real ones. The sacred music is not of the solemn-hymn type. Both are exuberant spirituals, with the director and soloist exhorting the crowd and the choir answering with enthusiasm and rhythmic hand-clapping. The result is quite moving. The recording in all three instances is capital.

The Old Chaperon and *L-I-L-L-A*; Tommy Dorsey and His Orchestra. Vocal by Mae Williams, Stuart Foster, and The Town Criers. Victor 20-2468.

● *Chaperon* is another Gay Cabellero with a jump niddle section added for variety. The reverse is a far from unusual song in honor of Los Angeles. Not enough good Dorsey trombone to suit me!

Louis Armstrong's Hot Five—Vol. 2—Columbia Album C-139, 4-10" discs. (Personnel: Louis Armstrong, trumpet; Kid Ory, trombone; Johnny Dodds, clarinet; Lil Armstrong, piano; John St. Cyr, banjo; Lonnie Johnson, guitar). *Rockin' Cahir* and *Jack-Armstrong Blues*; Louis Armstrong and his All Stars (Personnel: Louis Armstrong and Bob Hackett, trumpets; Jack Teagarden, trombone; Peanuts Hucko, E. Caceres, saxes and clarinets; Al Casey, guitar; All Hall, bass; J. Dough, piano; Cozy Cole, drums). Vocal by Armstrong and Teagarden. Victor 20-2348. *Star Dust* and *Wrap Your Troubles In Dreams*; Louis Armstrong and His Orchestra. Vocal by Armstrong. Columbia 37808.

● This is a fortunate group of releases which permits an opportunity again to compare the Louis Armstrong of three different periods in his colorful career. The Columbia records were made in 1927—some for Okeh, some for Columbia, and all are collector's items. The single Columbia, recorded in 1931, for Okeh, also is a collector's item. The Victor, recent recording, will certainly become in time a collector's item. The impression, after playing all the records, is that Louis' style and technique is fundamentally unchanged. They have been however expanded to fit larger groups of musicians and never, often unworthy music. Louis' trumpet tone has a more bell-like quality now but it does not flow as smoothly as it once did, and his phrasing is shorter. Basically the Louis of the Hot-Five days still lives in the Armstrong-Teagarden combination of today. What has been lost with the years is a sincerity of purpose. The Hot Five played as if they believed in every note. The later discs were often made with an eye on the dinner pail or to catch a doting public's applause. Fortunately, the Victor record is not one of these bread-and-butter ones. It has drive and superb technique from everyone concerned. The 1931 Columbia is almost as good musically with its solid rhythm. The 1927 discs are little gems. No one interested in good jazz should miss these records.

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